

Message

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Subject: OITA Weekly Report

Hot Issues

Congress Defines Circular Economy - On December 18, 2020, President Trump signed the [Save Our Seas 2.0 Act](#) into law. The law focuses on actions to address marine litter and includes sections that address U.S. policy on international cooperation to combat marine debris. The act defines circular economy as “an economy that uses a systems-focused approach and involves industrial processes and economic activities that—(A) are restorative or regenerative by design; (B) enable resources used in such processes and activities to maintain their highest values for as long as possible; and (C) aim for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems (including business models)” and promotes usage of this approach. The phrase ‘circular economy’ has long been opposed by the US government in international meetings and has instead advanced the term ‘resource efficiency’ or ‘sustainable materials management,’ so this will have potential implications for future US policy positions.

U.S. National Dialogues on Food Systems – USDA has organized a series of U.S. National Dialogues on Food Systems for the upcoming UN Food Summits which will take place on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2021. These dialogues are designed to obtain stakeholder input on US food systems challenges, solutions, and paths forward and will seek input from high-level subject matter experts/scientists. The Dialogue will cover each of the five UN Food System Summit Action Tracks – ensure access to safe and nutritious food; shift to sustainable consumption patterns; boost nature-positive production; advance equitable livelihood; and build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress. EPA (OITA) has been asked to serve as one of the facilitators for the U.S. National Dialogues. The first of the three US National Dialogues is scheduled for January 13th, the second dialogue is planned for March 31, and the third for May 26.

Upcoming Major Events/Decisions

Administrator’s Mission to Costa Rica: Administrator Wheeler and OITA AA McIntosh will travel to Costa Rica to advance bilateral collaboration, including marine litter, on January 6-10.

First US National Dialogue on Food Systems: OITA PDAA Nishida will serve as a facilitator to the first US National Dialogues on Food Systems on January 13.